

Attitudes of EFL Learners and Instructors towards the Application of Power Point Presentation in Iranian Classroom Context

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Abstract

This study intends to find out the attitudes of EFL learners and instructors concerning the use of power point presentation in teaching and learning. To this end, 40 learners and 10 instructors were selected as participants. The learners and instructors were given questionnaires including 10 and 15 items, respectively. The results indicated that both learners and instructors have positive attitudes towards the use of power point presentations in teaching and learning as conducted in EFL classrooms. The results also illustrated that EFL learners and instructors, especially the participants in this study, are in need of being familiarized with the use of technology in general and power point presentation in particular while teaching and learning. The results of this study could contribute to our understanding of the barriers which would hinder the application of technology in teaching and learning in the EFL context as focused by modern ELT approaches and methods.

Keywords: power point presentation, EFL learner and instructor, CALL, attitude

INTRODUCTION

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (henceforth CALL) can be defined as "the search for and study of the application of the computer in language learning and teaching" (Levy, 1997, p.1). The main aim of CALL is to concentrate on helping second language learners to learn efficiently. It seems that scholars and language instructors have designed CALL to motivate second language learners to use computer in order to increase their knowledge in many perspectives of learning.

Learners can use computers in different time budgets preset by the product-oriented syllabus which is considered to be an important motivation especially for younger learners. In other words, the development of CALL supplies a new view for language teaching and learning. One of the CALL's programs is known to be the Power Point Presentation (henceforth PPP) which has been widely used in academic contexts recently. However, it seems that the role of such technological applications have been undermined by numerous learners and instructors. The present study is included in one of the few attempts in uncovering pedagogical realities about using PPP in EFL classrooms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are evidences that PPP can influence learning. Mason and Hlynka (1998) argue that PPP assists the structuring of the content and processing of a lesson or lecture. Aiding note-taking which facilitate learners' study skills is another purported advantage of using PPP in language teaching and learning (Cook, 1998). Parks (1999) reports that learners preferred the lecture outline and graphs on the screen, thus concluding that PPP had had a positive impact on learner in language learning. Harrison (1999) argues that PPP enhances instruction and motivates learners to learn a second/foreign language.

There are some studies which focused on the role of the PPP in language teaching and learning (e.g., Nouri & Shahid, 2005; Jones, 2003; Alipanahi, 2014). In a tangible instance, Nouri and Shahid (2005) noticed the effect of using PPP in an accounting course to enhance learner working memory, long-term memory, and attitudes toward class presentation and the instructor. They conducted an experiment including a treatment-control design in a classroom setting throughout a full semester. In one section of an accounting principles II (i.e. managerial accounting course), PPP was used as the delivery system, while the second section was taught using a traditional delivery system. It was confirmed that PPP improves learner attitudes toward the instructor and class presentation. However, the results do not provide conclusive evidence that PPP improves working or long-term memory.

Jones (2003) reviewed the advantages and disadvantages associated with the use of PPP in teaching and learning and suggested some guidelines and pedagogical strategies that are essential to be used based on context. He summarized some of the key principles of presentation that are frequently ignored and suggests some of the approaches that need to be incorporated into good practice in Life Science teaching and learning. The use of PPP is often limited to an information transmission mode. He emphasized that this is a very restricted pedagogical use of a very powerful and flexible teaching and learning support tool. Samiei Lari (2014), in a study in the Iranian context, fifty-six female students of a secondary school in Lar city located in Fars, Iran were split into experimental and control groups and taught separately, one through power-point and video projection technology in classroom while the other group was taught via the traditional method through textbooks. An independent samples t-test confirmed the significant difference between the means of the two groups. The study approved of the

teaching procedures and techniques based on the use of technology that had a positive effect on learners' obtained scores.

Alkash and Al-Dersi (2013) studied the advantages of the use of power point presentations in the EFL classrooms in Libya. They focused on data gathered from the observing and interviewing 111 students. They found that using power point presentation could enrich teaching in the EFL context. They argued that this finding is due to the fact that using power point presentations could quip the teaching with some motivating features such as graphics, animations and sounds which keep the attention of the students more compared to traditional methods of teaching.

Alipanahi (2014) investigated how the use of PPP could improve the level of the knowledge of vocabulary and reading comprehension of Iranian senior high school learners. In her investigation, she focused on teaching some passages from senior high school textbook through the use of PPP. The interpretation of obtained scores in Pre/Post Tests indicated that the significant effect of PPP in developing reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge among Iranian senior high school learners. In short, review of related literature indicated that the use of technology has a pivotal role in teaching and learning.

There are also studies that have been done on the role of PPP in facilitating learning and language skills development. For instance, Rajabi and Ketabi (2012) addressed the impact of PPP on enhancing learners' application of cohesive devices to their academic writing, the results of which confirmed the role that PPP can play in developing productive language skills. However, there are several articles on the experts' reflection about the uncertainty (i.e. dilemma) of using PPP in EFL classrooms and if it can promote or hinder learning (e.g., Hill, Arford, Lubitow, & Smollin, 2012; Weimer, 2012).

Generally speaking, the literature exhibits mostly positive outlook towards using power point presentation in pedagogical contexts. There are not many studies focusing on this issue, though. Power point presentation is thus shown to be a commonly less studied technique in classroom contexts in several countries.

THIS STUDY

The use of technology has received little attention in teaching and learning in the EFL context. More specifically, in the EFL context of Iran (e.g. the city of Shadegan, the setting of the present study) technology is not widely used in teaching and learning. This makes the core issue of the present study even more significant. This study would promote instructors' awareness of a more modern approach in managing pedagogical contexts by uncovering the attitudes towards the application of PPP as conceived by Iranian EFL learners at university level. Thus, the following research questions are addressed in the present piece of research:

- What are the attitudes of Iranian EFL instructors towards the use of PPP?
- What are the attitudes of Iranian EFL learners towards the use of PPP?

METHOD

Participants

The participants in this study were 40 EFL undergraduate learners and 10 university instructors. The learners were selected randomly from B.A. students of TEFL varying from 18 to 21 years old (mean: 20.18). They were studying at Islamic Azad University and Payam Noor University in Shadegan, Iran. The instructors were teaching different EFL and Translation Studies courses at the above-mentioned universities. All of the instructors had M.A. and Ph.D. qualifications with at least three years of teaching experience.

Instruments

The applied instruments to collect data in the current study were two questionnaires (see the appendix). The aims of the questionnaires were to collect data concerning the attitudes of the learners and instructors at the two universities in Shadegan. The instructor's questionnaire included 10 five-point Likert-scale items and five open-ended questions along with some demographic optional information. The learner's questionnaire included 10 five-points Likert-scale items. All participants signed a consent form.

The questions, especially the five-point Likert-scales, were adapted from the questionnaire used in a similar study conducted in an EFL context on the use of Interactive White Board (IWB) in the classroom (Kalanzadeh, Shirvali vand & Javadani Mehr, 2014). These researchers were, too, inspired by Moss et al (2007) questionnaire on instructor and learner perceptions of IWBs. Changes were made in some parts of the questionnaires and in order to validate the changes, three experts in CALL studies checked them. The researcher-made questionnaires were validated and the reliability check with Cronbach Alpha resulted in the score of 0.79 for the constructed questionnaires.

Procedure

In order to conduct this study, the two questionnaires were given to the learners and instructors directly. The researcher explained to the participants how to correctly fulfill the task and they were urged to produce honest responses to the questions. They were given 30 minutes to fill in the questionnaires followed by the researcher's instructions. Finally, the filled questionnaires were analyzed and the findings were tabulated and discussed in details.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the analysis of the questionnaires are presented in two parts below. The first part deals with the result of the ten five-points Likert-scale items and five open ended items in the instructors' questionnaires. This part intends to figure out

the instructors' attitude towards the use of PPP in teaching. The second part deals with the result of the five-point Likert-scale items in the learners' questionnaire. This part intends to figure out the learners' attitude towards the use of PPP in learning.

Part 1: Instructors' attitudes towards the use of PPP in teaching

The items in this part are grouped into three sections. First section includes eight five-point Likert-scale items related to the benefits of power point program. Second section includes two five-point Likert scale items related to the instructors' opinion concerning power point program. Third section includes five open-ended questions related to the instructors' attitudes concerning the use of PPP in teaching and learning. First section included eight items as listed below:

- Using PPP reduces the time I spend writing on the board.
- Using PPP increases the time I spend on teaching the subject.
- Using PPP makes it easier to reach different sources and display them to whole class immediately.
- PPP are beneficial for saving and printing the materials generated during the lesson.
- PPP helps instructors to explain the subject more effectively.
- With the help of power point program, instructors can easily control the whole class.
- PPP can ease the continuation of the subject in the next session.
- Using PPP makes it easier for instructors to review, re-explain, and summarize the subject.

The results obtained in relation to the instructor's attitudes towards the benefits of PPP are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Benefits of PPP

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	No idea	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	90%	10%	-	-	-
2	60%	40%	-	-	-
3	40%	60%	-	-	-
4	50%	10%	40%	-	-
5	40%	40%	-	20%	-
6	30%	40%	20%	10%	-
7	50%	40%	10%	-	-
8	80%	20%	-	-	-

It is apparent from the results presented in table 1 that instructors fully agreed with the benefits of PPP stated in items one to eight. They believed that using PPP could free them from writing too much on the board and dedicate this time to teaching. The extra time saved as a result of using power point program could play a significant role in

efficient teaching of a complicated subject in a populated classroom. Thus, the extra time could be very valuable as it could be dedicated to providing the learner with more examples and explanations. This, in turn, contributes to the quality of teaching.

As for item 3 on the questionnaire, instructors agreed that they could equip learners with more resources when teaching. This could help instructors to provide more evidences, which, in turn, contributes to better learning of a subject. In response to item 8, all respondents indicated that using PPP could help instructors to easily refer back to earlier slides and review, re-explain, and summarize the subject. Instructor needs to link the ideas in a way that a full and clear image of the subject is created in the learner's mind. This contributes, directly, to a better understanding of the subject.

Almost two third of the instructors (60%) indicated that the materials used in the lesson could be easily printed and saved when using power point program. In such a case, the learner only takes important notes and dedicates more time to listen to the instructor. When the learner dedicates more attention to what the instructor says, the instructor could easily create the possible links between the ideas about the subject. In such classes, the learner follows the instructor and understands the material better than traditional classes in which the instructor writes on the white board and the learner has to write all the materials and ideas down and specialize less attention to follow the flow of information about the subject. 40% of the instructors had no idea in this regard. This might suggest that 40% of the instructors did not use the power point in their classes or they give the learners a pamphlet, which includes not only the ideas in the power point slides but also the details.

20% of the instructors think that PPP is of no use to explain the subject more effectively. This comment could be true in cases where the instructor is only referring to the ideas and materials presented in slides without giving the necessary details. It must be kept in mind that ideas in the slides are only topics to be covered and the instructor need cover the details and provide the learner with more resources such a pamphlet or textbook. It seems that the instructor, who thinks that power point slides can be helpful in teaching the subject more effectively, looks at such slides as only some main (i.e. essential) ideas to be covered. Such an instructor rarely makes wordy slides and only provides some necessary ideas in the slide. The instructor explains in detail the ideas by referring to the resources and asks learners to refer to the resources in case of they need more details.

The majority of instructors (70%) indicated that the use of PPP could help to achieve a better control of a class. This result might suggest that using this program in the class imposes the learner to follow the instructor carefully to be able to understand the links between the ideas presented. This attention and careful follow up could result in a better-controlled class. 20% of the instructors had no idea in this regard. This might be due lack of experience of teaching using power point program.

Most of the instructors (90%) in this study believed that PPP can help them to easily continue the subject in the next session. This result is not surprising as reviewing the slides presented in earlier session is an easy task. It could refresh the learner's mind and helps in a better understanding of the continuation of the topic. Second section of the questionnaires included two items as listed below:

- Using PPP make me a more efficient instructor.
- I like using PPP in my teaching.

The results concerning items 9 and 10 are displayed in table 2.

Table 2: Instructors' Attitudes towards the use of PPP

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	No idea	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9	30%	40%	30%	-	-
10	70%	30%	-	-	-

As shown in table 2, Almost more than two third of instructors (70%) believe that PPP can increase the effectiveness of their teaching. This belief is not at vain as the use of PPP can bring the benefits listed above (item 1-8) to the class. These benefits increase the quality of teaching and result in a better learning. All the instructors indicated that they like to use the power point program. This could stress the importance of the use of the power point program. When the instructor likes to use PPP in teaching and believes its positive role in teaching, then the university can invest in this regards by equipping the classes with the necessary equipments and held workshops for teaching instructors the use of power point program.

Third section included five open-ended items were used to see the attitudes of instructors, in more details, concerning the use of PPP. This part includes three sub-sections. The first sub-section includes three items, which deals with the instructor's experience of using PPP in teaching. The second sub-section includes one item, which deals with the barriers of using PPP in the class. The third sub-section included one item only, which dealt with the instructor's perspective on using the PPP in teaching. First sub-section included three items intended to figure out the information concerning the instructor's experience of using PPP in teaching. The items are:

- Have you used PPP in teaching?
- If your answer to item1 is *Yes*, state what were the uses of PPP in teaching?
- If your answer to item1 is *No*, state what were the reasons of not using PPP in teaching?

The corresponding results indicated that 60% of the instructors have used PPP in their teaching. They stated that they are using this program to provide more information within the class time. They, strongly, indicated that the use of this program helped them save time and equip the learners with more information concerning the topic of study.

They also stated that using different colors, fonts, and visual effects when designing the power point slides could help in catching the learners' attention and motivate them to follow the topic. The other use of the power point was that instructor could link the ideas in the slides easily by referring backward and forward to the slides.

The results also illustrated that 40% of the instructors have not used PPP in their teaching. They pointed two reasons for not using the PPP while teaching. The first reason was that preparing power point presentation is a time consuming task. The second reason was the lack of facilities for power point presentation. They indicated that in most of the classes at the universities and institutes that they teach the facilities for using power point program are not available. Second sub-section included one question put forward to figure out the barriers to use of PPP in teaching.

- What are the barriers to use PPP in teaching?

The results demonstrated that there were two main barriers to use PPP in teaching. First, lack of the facilities in the classes was a barrier, which was stressed by all instructors in the study. They, further, stated that the facilities are available in only a small number of the classes. This could hinder and discourage the instructors from spending time and preparing power point slides for teaching. Second, some of the instructors are not familiar with this program, thus they do not use it. Sub-section three includes one item raised to illustrate the instructors' perspective toward using PPP in teaching.

- Do you suggest using PPP in teaching? Why?

The results showed that all instructors suggested using PPP in teaching. They indicated that it acts as an attention-catcher device and motivate the learner to follow the topic. In addition, they specified that it could be of great help in courses in which there are so many complicated graphs, figures, tables, and photos. The instructors also stressed that the design of the power point slides should be attractive and interesting.

Part 2: Learner's attitudes towards the use of PPP

As mentioned previously, 10 five-point Likert-scale items were used to investigate the learner's attitude towards the use of PPP in learning. The 10 items could be grouped in two sections. First section includes six items related to the general attitude of learner towards the use of PPP, and second section includes four items related to the motivational issues concerning the use of PPP in teaching. First section included six items listed as follow:

- I feel uncomfortable using PPP in front of learners.
- I have positive attitudes towards the use of PPP in learning.
- I have negative attitudes towards the use of PPP in learning.
- I do not think learners are ready for the use of power point program.
- What I do in class with traditional methods is sufficient for learning.

- I am not the type to do well with PPP application.

Table 3 presents the result concerning the general attitudes of the learners in relation to the use of PPP in teaching.

Table 3: Learner's general attitudes towards the use of power point program

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	No idea	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	33%	10%	20%	-	36%
2	80%	13%	-	-	7%
3	7%	-	-	13%	80%
4	10%	37%	3%	20%	30%
5	10%	17%	6%	17%	50%
6	23%	27%	-	23%	27%

As for the item one, the learners had different attitudes concerning using PPP in front of learners. The frequencies in the two extremes were somewhat similar. This might suggest that learners even shared the same educational experience, but they were not the same in treating the use of technology in the classroom. The learners' response to this item might be affected directly by their feeling of presenting in front of learners. The other possible reason for such diversity in responses might be that they are not familiar with the use of the power point program. The learners' responses to the items two and three suggested that they had positive attitudes towards the use of PPP in the classroom. It needs to be noted here that the researchers interviewed five learners to see if they could get the difference between the items one, two and three. They could easily figure out the intended meaning. They said they even some of them had negative attitudes towards item one, but they generally went for the use of this program in the classroom. Thus, instructors need to take this positive attitude into account and include the use of this program in their teaching.

It is evident from figures in Table 3 that learners do not share the same attitudes towards their readiness for the use of power point program. This result might be justified based on the lack of familiarity and benefits of the use of the power point program. As the learners did not have the experience of participating in a classroom in which teaching was done using the power point program. As for the fifth item, majority of learners indicated that traditional methods are not sufficient and they suggested to the instructor to use the new technology in teaching. PPP with the benefits mentioned in the first part could help learners to see the impact of the use of technology in teaching. The learners' responses to item six could suggest that 50% of the learners participated in this study were not familiar with using power point program. This might show the necessity for running some workshops to familiarize the learners with this program. Second section included four items listed as follow:

- I think PPP make learning more enjoyable and interesting.
- PPP help keeping learners' attention longer.

- I think the use of PPP increase the interaction and participation of learners.
- I think the use of PPP increases the motivation of learners in learning.

Table 4: Motivational issues of using power point program

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	No idea	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	67%	13%	10%	-	10%
8	50%	33%	10%	-	7%
9	36%	57%	-	-	7%
10	60%	30%	3%	7%	-

As shown in table 4, majority of learners (80%) indicated that the use of PPP in the classroom makes learning more joyful and interesting. This could aid the instructor in teaching complicated courses and make sure that the use of this program could directly increases the learning of the learner. Most of the learners (83%) in this study also believed that PPP can help in taking the attention of the learner longer compared to traditional classes. This suggests that the use of the PPP in teaching could help instructors to come over of the problem of taking the attention of the learner in a crowd class.

93% of the learners believed that the use of PPP increases the learners' interaction and participation in the class. This could be very helpful in classes where the learner's should participate in class discussions with other learners or the instructor to facilitate the process of learning. Most of the learners (90%) believed that the use of PPP could increase the motivation of learners in learning. This is very significant in learning, where the learner seeks the motivation in the class. In general, having the learners' responses to the last four items on board, it is evident that most of the learners believed in the efficiency of PPP in teaching to increase the learner motivation. In the EFL context, motivation is an important factor, which needs to be taken seriously. In this context, the learner seeks the motivation in the class; thus, it could be concluded that this program could play a significant role in extrinsic motivation of the learners.

CONCLUSION

The present study set out to see the attitudes of Iranian EFL undergraduate learners and instructors towards the use of PPP in learning and teaching. The results illustrated that the majority of the instructors believed in the benefits of PPP in teaching and learning. They indicated that these benefits could contribute to the quality of teaching especially in large classes. They also stressed that the use of PPP could strengthen the sense of effectiveness in them. The results also showed that the instructors in this study had a positive attitude towards the use of PPP in their teaching.

As for the learners' responses to the questionnaire, the overall results indicated that generally they had a positive attitude towards the use of PPP in the teaching and they believed that the use of technology could facilitate their learning. The result also stated

that a greater number of the learners are not familiar with PPP and they need to be further familiarized with this program. They also saw the use of PPP in the class as a motivational issue and they thought that not only it facilitate learning but also can make learning more joyful.

The results presented in this study can help L2 instructors and learners in general and that in Shadegan city in particular to shed light on the use of technology issue in general and PPP in particular while managing EFL teaching and learning. The results would also more specifically contribute to syllabus designers in paying a closer attention to instructional goals of the learners while making product or process-oriented syllabi.

This study aimed to show the attitudes of the instructors and learners concerning the use of PPP in the EFL context of Shadegan. Thus, the result of this study could shed the light for other researchers to move forward and apply these results in the real context and see how helpful the result of these study. The researchers also could use this study as model to investigate the attitudes of the EFL instructors and learners towards other modes of technology such as interactive white boards, web log, etc. In addition, for other researchers who intend to carry out similar study with the focus on other modes of technology, it is better to interview the participant and not only ask them to answer the questionnaire. This could increase the validity and reliability of the results. The limitation of this study which hinders generalization of the results could be the small number of learners and instructors who participated in the study. It was due to manageability concerns, though.

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APPENDIX A

Instructors' attitudes towards the use of Power Point Presentation in teaching

1-Using power point resource reduces the time I spend writing on the board.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

2- When using power point in the classroom, I spend more time for the preparation of the lesson.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

3- I think using power point makes it easier to reach different sources and display them to the whole class immediately.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

4- Power point is beneficial for saving and printing the materials generated during the lesson.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

5- I can give explanations more effectively with the use power point .

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

6- With the help of using the power point, I can easily control the whole class.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

7- I think power point can be a good supplement to support teaching.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

8- Using power point makes me more efficient teacher.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

9- Using power point makes it easier for a teacher to review, re- explain, and summarize the subject.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

10- I like using power point technology in my lesson.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

11- Have you used PPP in teaching?

12- If your answer to item1 is *Yes*, state what were the uses of PPP in teaching?

13- If your answer to item1 is *No*, state what were the reasons of not using PPP in teaching?

14- What are the barriers to use PPP in teaching?

15- Do you suggest using PPP in teaching? Why?

APPENDIX B

Learner's attitudes towards the use of Power Point Presentation

1. I feel uncomfortable using power point in front my students.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

2. I have positive attitudes towards the use of power point in language instruction.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

3- I have negative attitudes towards the use of power point in language instruction.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

4- I do not think my students are ready for this technology.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

5- What I do in class with traditional methods is sufficient for teaching English.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

6- I am not the type to do well with power point based applications.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

7- I think power point make learning more enjoyable and more interesting.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

8- I can keep my student's attention longer with help of power point technology.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

9- I think power point increase the interaction and participation of the students.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree

10- I think my students are more motivated when I use power point in my lesson.

agree slight agree neither agree slightly disagree strongly disagree